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IRRITABLE ULCERS—THEIR PECULIARITIES AND TREATMENT.

FROM A LECTURE BY GEO. CRITCHETT, ESQ., ASSIST. SURG. TO THE LONDON HOSPITAL.

I HAVE now a few remarks to offer you on the subject of irritable ulcers. I have given them a separate notice, because they present some marked peculiarities, and require some important modification of treatment. They are most distressing to the sufferer, and resist all the ordinary methods of treatment, and therefore deserve our best consideration. The irritable sore is usually small and superficial; it is most commonly found in females, usually situated about the ankle, and sometimes, but not invariably, complicated with varicose veins. The surrounding parts look of a somewhat deeper-red color, but the indications of inflammatory action are slight, and bear no comparison whatever with the excessive pain complained of; herein lies the grand distinguishing characteristic of this particular form of ulcer—that the appearance and symptoms give no adequate suggestion of the extreme amount of tenderness and suffering experienced by the patient. The sore itself looks patchy, with bright-red spots mixed with yellow; the surface is glazed, and the discharge thin; the edges are irregular and undefined. This is the more common appearance, but I have met with some sores with a tolerably healthy aspect, and yet extremely irritable. I used formerly to be much embarrassed with these cases, but experience has, I think, taught me a method by which they are to be controlled; and I shall endeavor to explain my mode of treatment by relating to you some of the particulars of a somewhat remarkable case, from which I first caught my present views respecting what I believe to be the most successful way of curing this affection. Some years ago, I was sent for to see a female between 50 and 60 years of age, residing in the neighborhood of Spitalfields. She was the wife of a clerk at the Docks, and had been accustomed to a regular allowance of beer and spirits, though never to the extent of producing intoxication. On entering, I found her pacing the room, apparently in great agony. I have seldom seen a countenance that exhibited greater irritability and suffering, and I was told by her daughter that she spent a considerable part both of the day and night in this way. She pointed out to me, as the cause of all her anguish, a superficial ulcer, about the size of a shilling, situated on the tibia, just above the inner malleolus; it looked rather angry, and there was slight sur-

rounding redness; there was no thickening in the vicinity, or any general swelling of the limb, though the great saphena vein was somewhat enlarged. The ulcer had existed much in the same state for about six months, the pain occasionally remitting, and then returning with increased violence. Her general symptoms indicated great irritability of system; the pulse was weak and quick, the tongue was foul and tremulous, and there was a well-marked gouty diathesis. During this time she had applied to three or four medical men in succession, and had of course tried a great variety of local and constitutional remedies, but without obtaining any relief. She was of a very impatient temper, and positively refused to take any more medicine, but expressed her determination to lose the limb if the pain did not abate. I wished to apply the nitrate of silver, but she told me it very much increased her suffering at the time, without any subsequent benefit. I had so often healed such much more formidable wounds that I did not anticipate much difficulty in this case, and I felt sure, if I could only close the sore, all pain would cease; I found that strapping had been applied, but it had only aggravated every symptom. This had so often occurred to me before, in practice, that I determined to support the limb in my usual way, and as all the symptoms, according to my former experience, indicated that this should be done lightly, and as the wound was so exquisitely tender that she could hardly bear me to touch it, I proceeded to envelope the entire limb as gently as possible in strapping. I persevered in this plan for about three weeks, but without the slightest benefit; indeed, with increase of the painful symptoms. At the end of this time, finding I had been anticipated in every other remedy, I determined to give the plan that had so often stood me in good stead, in what appeared to be far worse wounds, one more trial, and at least make some impression on the case, be it for better or worse; therefore, although the sore looked angry, and was situated on the bone, although there was no perceptible swelling, and the surrounding parts were of a bright-red color, and everything seemed to contra-indicate firm support, yet, as a *dernier resort*, I applied the strapping as tightly as my muscular power enabled me. I may almost say, that from that hour all pain ceased, and at the end of a fortnight the sore was perfectly healed, and I have reason to believe has remained well ever since. It was remarkable in this case how much the irritability of system subsided with the relief of the local disease.

I have met with many other cases of this type, and I have uniformly succeeded in relieving them in the same way. A very well-marked case of the same kind occurred at the Hospital a few months ago: the patient was a middle-aged female; the sore was small, situated over the inner malleolus, and complicated with varicose veins; the pain was intense, and aggravated by rest, being always much worse during the night. I directed caustic to be applied, and the leg to be strapped as tightly as possible. This was continued for some weeks without amendment, and she begged me to try some other plan, as she was nearly worn out. I was so convinced that this was a case that was only to be relieved in

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this way, that I took it in hand myself, in order to give the very tight strapping a thorough trial, knowing that it is only after long practice, and under the conviction of the necessity of using great force, that a requisite amount of tightness is obtained. I strained the plaster in this way with all my strength, causing the woman to cry out as it passed over the wound. But it was her last cry of pain; her next was, that I would repeat the application; and in a very short time she was quite well. Nitrate of silver is sometimes a useful adjunct in allaying the irritability, but occasionally it cannot be borne. I have met with some of these cases in which the pain has continued in a somewhat mitigated degree until the sore was quite healed; you must therefore persevere in all cases where you find the sore diminishing, even though the pain may still remain, bearing in mind that as soon as the ulcer is cured, all suffering is at an end.

I feel, then, that I am justified, from the above cases, and others of a similar kind that have come under my notice, in forming the conclusion, that whenever irritability is the leading symptom, not being attended with a proportionate amount of acute inflammation, a degree of tightness that almost under any other circumstances would be most injurious, is not only easily borne, but is absolutely required for the cure of the case.—*London Lancet.*

INFLUENCE OF QUACKERY ON HEALTH, MORALS, &c.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

Remarks of Mr. Sanborn, of Hanover, in the N. H. Legislature, upon the Bill incorporating the New Hampshire Medical Botanic Society.

WHEN the Portuguese navigators first doubled the Cape of Good Hope, in the 15th century, and coasted along the shores of southern India, the evidences of wealth and refinement which everywhere met the eye inclined them to believe that they had discovered a *christian* instead of a *heathen* country. The crew of the first ship that landed upon that coast visited a heathen temple. At its entrance, they were met by priests, wearing beads, resembling the Catholic rosary, and holding in their hands vessels of holy water, which they sprinkled upon those who entered. Within the temple, they discovered numerous images, which they took to be those of saints. This completed the illusion, and they all prostrated themselves in an act of solemn devotion. But one sailor, being a little more considerate than the rest, before saying his prayers, raised himself to survey the interior of the temple, and observing that the images were grotesque and unsightly, having divers supernumerary hands and feet and other appurtenances not strictly human, he put in the following caveat before proceeding with his devotions:—"If these be devils, it is God that I worship." I must confess that I approach this new temple of science which this bill proposes to rear, with similar

feelings. I know not whether to enter its portals as a worshipper or a recusant; whether to offer incense upon this new altar, or bid defiance to the presiding divinity. If it be the real object of the petitioners to promote true science, I am in favor of the bill. If they propose to multiply the mis-called remedies for the cure of diseases, and thereby promote empiricism, I am opposed to the bill. The bill is so drawn that it does not reveal the *modus operandi* which the petitioners propose to adopt "for the promotion of medical and. botanical science." But it is fair to judge of men by their works. Knowing the petitioners to be extensively employed in the manufacture and sale of vegetable medicines, it is reasonable to infer that the object of this bill is to increase their sales, give popularity to their business, and impart dignity and character to their peculiar profession. Whether they have fairly stated their object, remains for the House to decide. If a company of miners from Frapconia should come here and ask for an act of incorporation for the promotion of *mineralogy*, and, under the vague and general provisions of such a bill, should establish an extensive iron foundry and factories for the manufacture of all kinds of machinery, we should infer that they had obtained their charter under false pretences; and we should the more readily infer this, if the same corporation should proceed to the working of precious metals, mixing them with base alloys, and selling their spurious articles for pure gold and silver. Or if an association of speculators should obtain an act of incorporation for the promotion of the science of *chemistry*; and, under a charter thus obtained, should set up an establishment for dyeing and printing calicoes, and in addition should compound and sell all kinds of adulterated paints and oils, every reasonable man would say that they had abused their privileges and forfeited their charter.

The cases supposed seem to me to be precisely similar to the one now under consideration. The petitioners ask for an act for the promotion of science; they intend, as I believe, to manufacture and sell vegetable medicines, to be heralded to the world as the wonderful discoveries of scientific men acting under this new charter. I propose, therefore, to discourse at some length upon the influence of popular nostrums, for the cure of diseases, upon the *health, morals and pecuniary resources* of the community. I trust that while I confine my remarks to charlatans and impostors, no gentleman will regard my discourse as personal to himself.

The most scientific physicians of the age admit that, in past ages, too much medicine has generally been administered to the sick. Excessive medication has been a fault of many practitioners of the healing art; and why? Simply because a large proportion of the diseases for which physicians are called upon to prescribe, are *imaginary*, and the patients really need no medicine. All physicians and metaphysicians agree on this point, that the imagination has an important agency both in the production and cure of diseases. The mind and body are so intimately associated that they mutually affect each other. Moreover, many real diseases are merely *functional* and not *organic* in their nature. They belong rather to the movement of the vital machinery than to its

separate organs. For instance, a clock or watch may be perfect, in all its wheels, and yet fail to mark the time accurately, because it is not well regulated. So the human system may be sound and entire, in all its parts, and yet its healthy functions may be so deranged as to render the patient really ill. Now what does such a man need? Simply the advice of a competent physician, who may prescribe, perhaps, a change of diet, a change of place, new objects of attention, increased exercise, or some inert and harmless medicine to satisfy the demands of the patient. The existence of this great class of merely *functional* and frequently *imaginary* diseases, gives the homœopathist his wonderful success. Being called, in many cases, where the patient needs no medicine, he administers an infinitesimal quantity, just to satisfy the demands of the sick, that "something should be done," and the man speedily recovers. Did any sane man ever persuade himself that the efficacy of a medicine is increased precisely as its quantity is diminished? and that the smaller the dose, the more potent is its influence? If the doctrines of the founder of homœopathy be true, an ounce of opium would convert Lake Superior into excellent paregoric, and the world might be supplied with soporific mixtures already *shaken* and fit for use, as long as time shall last. But Hahnemann was a deceiver and an impostor. His own language to a friend was—"I give medicines but very seldom, although I always prescribe small powders! I do this for the sake of keeping up in the patient's mind the firm belief that each powder contains a particular dose of some medicine! Most patients will get well by adopting a simple mode of living, and by placing a boundless confidence in their medical attendants." It is, no doubt, well for the patient to confide in the skill of his physician, and it is sometimes well to humor the patient's desire for a prescription, though no medicine be needed. In such cases, the most eminent physicians frequently administer some innocent substance, as a bread pill, or a little gum Arabic water, which usually proves successful.

Besides the imaginary diseases above alluded to, another large class arises from slight indigestion, or from occasional intemperance in food or drink. A man abuses his system by excessive eating, or by improper or innutritious food. He suffers from nausea, faintness and depression of spirits. At night he is troubled by bad dreams or incubus. Another, perhaps, has been too closely confined to a sedentary life, has inhaled bad air, and feels languid and feeble, experiencing what an old lady once denominated "a sense of all-gone-ness." What do such patients need? The first should *fast*; the second should "take up his bed and walk." But while they are suffering from a voluntary transgression of the laws of health, the advertisement of some nostrum vender meets their eye. It matters little what the medicine may be, it is adapted to cure any and every specific disease. Their symptoms are exactly described; thousands have already been cured, and respectable men certify to the efficacy of the offered remedy. They, too, are persuaded to try it. They take into the stomach, already enfeebled and needing rest—a stimulant, perhaps an active poison, which operates as a local irritant. The patient immediately feels

better, and the next day is ready to certify to the wonderful efficacy of the new remedy, and perhaps on the day following he finds it necessary to resort to it "*yet again.*" The miraculous cure can be easily accounted for. The operation of the stimulant or local irritant is simply this. It has pleased the Creator to lay up in the store-house of the human constitution a vast amount of strength and animal spirits, which remain latent while the system is in healthy and undisturbed action, but are developed by certain exciting agents and causes. This dormant energy may be waked to action either through the agency of strong passions and mental excitement, or by medical agents operating mechanically upon the delicate lining membrane of the internal organs. Alcohol and all the diffusive stimulants operate, in this way, upon the animal system. As most of the nostrums of the day contain alcohol, or some other poison or irritant resembling it in its effects, we may very properly illustrate the operation of patent medicines, by the well-known effects of alcohol. Alcohol, like other active poisons, is *indigestible*; and, of course, *innutritious*. No part of the system can assimilate it. When taken into the mouth its tendency is to corrugate its lining surface and produce a burning sensation in the organs of taste. It produces the same effect upon the stomach. It is taken up by the absorbents, and mingling with the blood, it moves in a fiery current through the arteries and veins, visiting, in its course, the heart, the lungs, and the brain. Of course, the nervous system is greatly excited, and there is an increase of nervous energy, and consequently an increase of strength and animal spirits. The latent powers of the system are roused, and the machinery of life moves with an increased and unnatural velocity. This effect continues till the offensive fluid, being rejected at every portal of life within, is thrown off from the system by the emunctories and pores of the skin. Herein it operates as a deceiver. The weary man, or the sick man, drinks and feels refreshed. He is, as he believes, both brighter and stronger; while, in fact, he has only drawn, in advance, upon that nervous energy, which is treasured up to meet the demands of the system in cases of emergency. Any of the violent passions would, when in action, produce the same result. Let a neighbor approach the toper just as he is about to raise the cup to his lips; and spurn him with the foot or buffet him with the fist, without provocation, and will not the insult make the weary man forget his fatigue? Will it not increase his strength as much as though he had swallowed the potation. No doubt it would; and the excitement resulting from the exercise of any strong passion would produce the same result, whether it be love or fear, jealousy or hate. But in the human constitution, as in physics, action and re-action are equal and in contrary directions. The unnatural excitement, from whatever cause produced, whether by alcohol, vegetable elixirs or passion, is followed by unnatural depression and consequent physical exhaustion. A man, by using artificial stimulants, may do the work of two days in one, and he will live two days in one; and this is the reason why drunkards do not live out half their days. The same is true of those who swallow large quantities of patent medicines, which

usually contain some active poison. They operate as a stimulant or local irritant upon the already jaded stomach, destroy its healthy action, and produce a chronic and incurable disease.

But it may be asked, if this be the ordinary effect of frequent medication by popular nostrums, why are so many cures announced? The answer is obvious. The sick recover in spite of the medicine, but would recover much sooner without it. Many of these boasted cures are only lucky coincidences. *Post hoc, ergo propter hoc*, is the great stumbling block of ignorant men. One event follows another in the order of time, the inference is that the consequent was the effect of the antecedent. Patrick called on his physician for a prescription for his wife. He was ordered to apply a blister to the chest. Pat having no chest in the house, applied the blister to the lid of an old trunk, and the wife *happened* to recover, and was ready to certify to the efficacy of the application. A few years ago, there lived in Vermont a medical prophet, who healed the diseases of patients at a distance, provided they sent him a minute account of their symptoms, *with the required fee*. A lady, residing in the county of Cheshire, in this State, who had for a long time been in ill health, had faith in the prophet. She besought a neighbor who was about to visit the residence of the prophet, to carry a letter detailing the symptoms of her disease. She inquired diligently the time when he would arrive at the place, that she might know whether her disease was affected by the power of the prophet. At the supposed time of his arrival, she began to amend; the next day she walked abroad, extended her walk the day following, and when the neighbor returned, was much improved in health. On inquiry, she ascertained that the faithless neighbor had never seen the prophet, and her unopened letter and money were returned. The history of charlatany is full of such facts. It is no doubt true, that more than half the cases of illness that occur, would terminate successfully if no physician were called and no medicine were taken. These cases furnish the certificates of impostors.

The cure of the scrofula by the royal touch, the weapon ointment and sympathetic powder, in popular use about 200 years ago, furnish testimony in point. For many generations, it was customary for the kings of England to lay their hands upon persons afflicted with the "king's evil" (so called), and hang a piece of gold around the neck of each patient. The profligate Charles II. is said to have touched nearly 100,000 patients of this description, all of whom were essentially benefited, except in cases of deficient faith. It will not be denied that the peculiar mental state of patients, in such cases, may have modified real disease, and perhaps, in some instances, removed it; still, the virtue resided in the *patient*, not in the *King*. The *unguentum armarium*, or weapon ointment, which was so popular for a time in healing wounds, was applied to the *weapon* and not to the *wound*. A similar use was made of the sympathetic powders, for the relief of pain. A handkerchief or some article of apparel belonging to the sick was moistened with a solution of the powder, and the patient was relieved. Thousands were ready to testify to the efficacy of each of these absurd curative pro-

cesses. So when Perkins's metallic tractors were in vogue, about 40 years ago, it is said that a million and a half of radical cures were announced as resulting from the use of these harmless pieces of metal. They were soon discarded by the public when it was ascertained that equally wonderful results were produced by tractors of lead or wood, with nails, pieces of bone, slate pencil and tobacco pipe. Then men forbore to pay five guineas for a couple of ounces of brass and iron! Surely the poet has well said:—

"The world is generally averse
To all the truth it sees and hears,
But swallows nonsense and a lie
With greediness and gluttony."

"Surely the pleasure is as great
Of being cheated as to cheat."

The truth is, no man is proof against deception; and when the body is weakened by disease, real or imaginary, the mind suffers from sympathy; and under such circumstances, the most intelligent are easily duped by pretenders and quacks. Their medicines always promise more than any medicine, however good, could be expected to perform. It is safe to assert that there is not an advertised nostrum, in the market, which does not hold out false hopes to the sick. Every such advertisement is an imposition upon the public, whether it come from physicians regular, irregular or defective; and in the grammar of medicine, the latter class is very numerous. If one tithe of what the vegetable doctors assert were true, we might attain unto what the progenitors of our race would have secured by partaking of the fruit of the tree of life. We might "live forever." If the pompous assertions of the makers of cosmetics, washes for the face, and beautifying lotions, were true, we might have ladies beautiful as the houris, with the assurance of perpetual juvenescence. In a word, we might bid defiance to the darts of death, and the vegetable doctor might stand over the prostrate king of terrors, and exclaim, in triumph, "Oh death, where is thy sting?" and then turn to his patient, and in the language of Oriental adulation, exclaim, oh patient, "live forever"!

It is pretended that nobody is deceived by the professions of quacks. Every day's experience contradicts this assertion. The rich and the poor, the wise and the simple, are all occasionally deluded by these cheating, lying impostors. The human mind is so constituted, that we must confide in others. We are made to trust each other; to believe the solemn declarations of our fellows. Without this mutual confidence, society could not exist; hence the abuse of it becomes the more odious. None are so credulous as the sick. They listen readily to the advice and suggestions of others. Fearing the ravages of disease, they eagerly lay hold of any hope, however delusive, which empirics may hold out to them. The extensive sale of vegetable medicines proves this. A few years ago, when Morison's vegetable life pills were so popular in this country, a suit was commenced in a court in Massachusetts, by Morison and Moat, against John K. Palmer, for selling a spurious article. It appear-

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ed there in evidence, that the proprietors had been so successful in England, as to be able to establish the "British College of Health," at an expense of \$250,000, from which agents were sent into all the principal cities in Europe and America. The demand for these pills became so great, in this country, that the sale amounted to \$250,000 in a single year; and the seller of the spurious pills had disposed of 100,000 boxes, before he was arrested by the patentee. It appeared, furthermore, that this "British College of Health," with its high sounding name, had neither charter, professors, nor students; but consisted of an immense building in the suburbs of London, with appropriate apparatus for the manufacture of "Hygeian pills"; and that the proprietor was neither surgeon, physician nor man of science, but an arch quack. What has become of this vaunted remedy, in the brief space of ten years? Gone, like thousands of its pedecessors, to the shades of Erebus and old Night!

The fact that new nostrums remain popular only for a brief period, proves that their healing virtues, like the diseases they profess to cure, are *imaginary*. Each remedy has its brief day of glory, and is succeeded by a rival candidate for the popular applause. Each new invention has a two-fold office. It comes to bury the dead and herald a new race. Every fresh adventurer denounces all rivals as deceivers and impostors. These makers and venders of nostrums abuse each other like pickpockets. They wage upon every fellow quack an internecine war. Every member of the fraternity is an Ishmaelite to every other. On all sides it is war to the knife, and the knife to the hilt. The dead lie prostrate on many a hard-fought field; but it is the *patients* who die, not the *quacks*! But are we not bound to believe what these impostors say of each other? Who should know the tricks of the trade better than they? If we can trust their promises, we certainly are bound to credit their assertions concerning the fraternity. They warn us, "as we *value health*," to shun all prescriptions of quacks except their own; and this is done by every inventor of a new medicine. Look at the flaming advertisements of the rival Drs. Townsend, which stare us in the face from every paper printed in Concord, together with a beautiful wood cut, representing old Dr. Jacob Townsend himself. These rivals mutually vilify each other. If they speak the truth of each other, no greater villains walk the earth, "unwhipped of justice." They both offer for sale a syrup of sarsaparilla. The old doctor says he has paid \$200,000 within the last eight years for advertising; and whence came this immense sum? We cannot suppose that any man would devote more than a tithe of his income to advertising; therefore the doctor must have been doing an excellent business in the sarsaparilla line, for eight years. Indeed, Messrs. Allison & Gault, of this town, certify that they alone have sold over 4000 bottles of that article within the past year.

At the present day there is a great fondness for vegetable medicines. Anything having the prefix of vegetable to it, *goes down* with the multitude. Notwithstanding everybody knows that no new vegetable has been discovered, and no new properties have been detected in vegeta-

bles before known; still they confide in the assertions of cheats and knaves that the commonest herbs may be made sovereign remedies for "all the ills that flesh is heir to." It is equally well known that a majority of all the medicines in the pharmacopœia of the regular faculty, are of vegetable origin; and, that the most deadly poisons, such as destroy life almost at a blow, like a thunderbolt, are from the vegetable kingdom; still we are told that all vegetable remedies are safe, while mercury is the great bugbear of the many. But it has been proved, in courts of justice, where quacks have been arraigned for manslaughter, that pills, professing to be purely vegetable, have produced *salivation* in the patient. There are, perhaps, a score of infallible remedies for consumption; and, there can scarcely be a doubt that the only ingredient in them all, which serves to allay the irritation of a chronic cough, is *opium*! This for a time quiets the consumptive patient, and deceives him with the hope of recovery; but by frequent use of it, the strength is exhausted, and the system sinks under the repeated assaults of empiricism.

But of all the gross and palpable impositions upon the public credulity, the pretence that the Indians understand the healing virtues of roots and herbs is the most absurd and monstrous. Civilized and christian men having recourse to savages to learn science! It is, however, a notorious fact that Indian "medicine men," as they are called, are the greatest impostors living. They surpass their civilized imitators. They "out-Herod Herod" in knavery. The whole system of practice among the Indians has always consisted in fraud and pretence. Catlin, who spent years among our North American Indians, constantly affirms this. They know literally nothing of the power of simples. They employ over the sick, charms, spells and incantations, and make use of amulets and consecrated medicine bags, as curative agents. Yet our scientific botanists go to these ignorant, besotted dupes of superstition, to learn medical science! Sometimes a veritable Indian doctor appears among us, with more *brass* than *copper* in his face. He makes his prescription with great gravity and solemnity. He cuts his herbs and gathers his roots under the influence of certain astronomical signs! These signs, by the way, are but a relic of old astrology, as ancient as the Pharaohs, and have no more significancy for us than the worship of Isis. But our doctor regards the "stellar influence" in gathering his herbs. He strips the bark *upward* for an emetic, and *downward* for a cathartic. He steeps the whole in river water taken up in a peculiar way. I once heard of an instance where the whole process failed because the patient dipped the water up stream instead of down! "Because you see," said the learned doctor, "if the water be dipped up stream, it goes *agin* natur; if down stream, it helps *natur*!" Such are Indian doctors. *Ab uno disce omnes.*

Last, but not least; I mention the inventions of Thomsonians. To this class belong the petitioners. According to the system of farmer Thomson they practise medicine. This system everywhere discourage study, and encourages empiricism. Like Dogberry in the play, they

not only hold that "reading and writing comes by nature," but medical science comes by inspiration, or accident. The founder of this system gained his knowledge entirely by experiment and chance. By accident he discovered the emetic properties of lobelia. He first administered it as a medicine to his own children for measles. On the rehearsal of this fact, one of his eulogists exclaims:—"Hark! attention the universe! Momentous event! To his own child, when greatly debilitated, did Samuel Thomson administer, in November, in the year 1802, several portions of lobelia inflata as an emetic. Propitious moment, well worthy of being celebrated, could the exact time be ascertained, throughout all ages to come"! The philosophy of this great man was truly simple! He says—"the component parts of all animal bodies are earth and water. These are the solids; fire and air are the fluids. Death and life are cold and heat." This is all very natural, very artless, and clear as mud! But it is as difficult to see the bottom of a puddle as of the ocean; hence, by a figure of speech, we may denominate this bold theory, *profound*. Medical practice is greatly simplified by his new hypothesis of disease. "Disease," says he, "is a unit, having one common and general cause, and requiring one general remedy for its removal." Hence steam and lobelia were applied by him and his followers in all conceivable cases. But if human diseases require but *one* remedy, this new philosopher found that human credulity would tolerate some *twenty* or *thirty* different preparations of it, and the individual who heads the petition now before this House, has invented nearly as many more purely vegetable remedies! How complicated this *unit* of disease and remedy becomes, as we move onward, by the power of steam! This is the great motive power of all modern enterprise. Our ships are propelled by steam; our machinery is driven by steam; we travel by steam; and any man who chooses may take his long and last journey to "that undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveller returns," by *steam*.

I have said that the Thomsonian practice discourages scientific study. This appears in the writings of all its advocates. In the "Thomsonian Manual," printed at Boston, No. 8, page 121, it is written—"Dr. Thomson has always opposed the idea which some entertain, that a college education is necessary for a practitioner, or to advance the glorious system of which he is the founder." The writer admits that medical institutions may be useful, but still maintains that they are not necessary; for he adds, "that it requires a long and laborious study of the anatomy and physiology of man, or a profound knowledge of botany, in order to make a successful Thomsonian practitioner, the career of Thomson and many others proves the contrary." He goes on to assert that the requisition of study for a year or two in some college or infirmary creates "a dangerous monopoly," and tends to clothe the new theory in mystery. Dr. O. P. Warren, the first individual named in this act of incorporation, in his "Vegetable Expositor," No 1, page 19, speaking of botanic practice, says—"The shop of the chemist, with its thousand of technical instruments, and the paraphernalia of the druggist, are not ne-

cessary to its existence. Nature is its laboratory. Nature, his chemist, furnishes, in every clime, the cure for every incident disease, in some simple vegetable; and every child of nature understands the disease and remedy. It is only within the pale of civilization that these vegetable remedies have been unknown." He adopts, it seems, the notion of Indian skill; nay more, he says, page 1 of the same pamphlet, that Samuel Thomson "learned from the beast the physic of the field." The only useful lesson taught by the beasts is to shun vegetable poisons. They never crop these vile weeds, except by mistake. The object of this system is to multiply nostrums, and sell them to enrich the inventors. These medicines have already become a heavy burden to the community. They need no legislative encouragement, but rather require prohibitory enactments. They have become as numerous as the frogs of Egypt. They are found in our marts of business, in our shops, and in our streets. They are carried by pedlers from house to house. They come up into our chambers, and our kneading troughs, and our beds! The makers of them amass princely fortunes and live in palaces. The buyers of them, for the most part, lose their purchase money and their health. It is by no means contended that all these nostrums are uniformly injurious to health. Some of them may be useful, if properly applied. But as they are used indiscriminately by all classes of persons and for all sorts of diseases, they are undoubtedly productive of infinite mischief. Such of them as are invented by illiterate pretenders to medical knowledge, cannot be safely used by any person. Many of the Thomsonian practitioners boast of their ignorance and glory in their shame. They openly abuse learning and its advocates; yet they prate about nature's laws. They pretend "to assist nature" in the cure of diseases. How can they assist nature, unless they know how nature acts? They are quite as likely to contravene the laws of nature as to co-operate with her, unless they have thoroughly studied physiology and anatomy. These sciences they discard. Botany alone they study, and that *empirically*, and thus "*assist nature*." If nature could utter her voice, she would, no doubt, exclaim in the language of the Patriarch of Uz, "miserable comforters are ye all."

MEDICAL MATTERS IN NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

SIR,—Having recently visited Natchez, and medical matters claiming most of my attention, I have concluded to furnish you with some notes and reflections, in a summary manner; and in the absence of more interesting matter, you may lay them before the medical public. It is well known that Natchez occupies a commanding site on the great Father of western waters. The city is situated on a bluff, rather closely built, but the ground on which it stands is undulating, of a hard, firm sub-strata. The streets are unpaved. During the summer months the dust is annoying, and in winter mud occupies its place. No sources of malaria appear

to exist within the city or suburbs. On the opposite side of the river is the level, broad delta of the Mississippi river, as far as the eye can reach; and at this point the river makes a majestic turn, sweeping by at the base of the high bluffs, leaving a small narrow strip of terra firma, and here is *Natchy* under the hill.

Perhaps never, in the history of this place, has an epidemic appeared, leaving the public mind in such an unsettled state as to its nature, as the one just passed. All admit that there were some yellow fever cases, so distinct and well marked as not to be mistaken. Many entertain the opinion that dangué, or a new Spanish disease, *sui generis*, was the main and leading epidemic, and that the yellow fever cases were only sporadic, such as is common every year. Some claim identity for the two, as being equally epidemic; others, that all the cases were yellow fever, and claim the vantage ground that it was a materially modified form, unlike any epidemic heretofore known in this locality. One thing is certain, it was mild, and hardly ever proved fatal; the number of deaths during its prevalence being but little larger than is common under ordinary circumstances. All agree, so far as I could learn, that a mild course of treatment was the one indicated, and was the most successful. The disciples of Hahnemann conceive the results of this epidemic to place their peculiar doctrines upon a basis so firm as never to be shaken. Dr. Davis, for many years an influential and successful practitioner of allopathy, but recently a convert to the infinitesimal doses, is said to have come out of this epidemic with new laurels. Dr. Stone, a leading physician of the old school, and a strong advocate of the doctrines he entertains, will shortly be out with an elaborate essay upon the subject, which may alarm some, astonish others, and confuse many upon the unsettled subject of epidemic yellow fever. It will doubtless have a good effect in calling attention to the subject, and in leading the faculty to think for themselves upon a subject which lieth at our doors, and may be ever among us.

My visit to the Natchez hospital afforded me pleasure. It is a State and city charity. The buildings are in good repair, located on a promontory of land, a little elevated above the city. The grounds are susceptible of great improvement, which has already been commenced in them. One striking feature to me was the external appearance of the building; and one to be admired was the absence of anything like a public building, presenting itself as a splendid two-storied private mansion, with porticoes in front; thus it has no forbidding aspect to the outcast sufferer who may become its occupant. This institution is at present under the entire control and management of Dr. Blackburn, whose vigilance has raised it in a very short time from almost total obscurity to an enviable position as a city charity; he has also a private hospital for pay patients, which I understand is well patronized. The doctor being absent from the city, I had not the pleasure of learning any statistics.

The question has often been asked, is Natchez a healthy location? I will answer the interrogatory by referring to the second annual report of the Board of Visitors of the Natchez Institute, which to my mind

shows almost an unprecedented state of good health. They state that, "the whole number of admissions was 691, and the daily absences amount, when averaged, to about 1-15th of the whole number. But one in fifteen is too large a proportion for Natchez. There is no necessity or excuse for it. On the score of health, not one in a hundred need be absent; nor does bad weather form a better reason. The health of the children has been remarkably good. Out of the whole number admitted, there has been but *one* death during the year, and that was a casualty. Last year, out of 669 admitted, there were *three* deaths. We considered that fact as indicating the wonderful salubrity of the city. But the present year, with a larger number, there has not been a single death from disease. The ratio of mortality among the children for the year ending July 4th, 1846, was stated in the report of the time to be 44-100th of *one* per cent., or one in 223 per annum. The year ending July 4th, 1847, the ratio was *one* in 691. These facts show a degree of healthfulness unheard of in any portion of our country. Let us examine this matter still closer. The number of deaths during the last two years, among the pupils of the institute, has been *four*. Two of these were casualties, and are not to be considered in ordinary bills of mortality showing the health of the city. There have then been only two deaths from disease of any kind. Within these two years there has been 1360 admissions to the schools, and two of these have died; making the proportion of deaths *two* in 1360, for two years, or *one* in 680 per annum; and let it further be remembered, that both of these deaths occurred about the same time, and from the same disease, viz., scarlatina, then a prevailing epidemic. This disease is of rare occurrence in this climate, and not malignant in character. The last time it prevailed, so far as I can ascertain, was in 1833. Hence we arrive at the astonishing fact, that not a single death has occurred among the pupils of the Institute from its foundation, of any disease endemic in the country."

Yours with respect,

C. S. MAGOUN.

Woodville, Mi., Dec. 12th, 1848.

THE BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

BOSTON, JANUARY 10, 1849.

Life Insurance and Irregular Physicians.—In a paragraphic notice, two weeks ago, of the character and stability of the American Mutual Life Insurance Company, a mistake crept in by some unaccountable mishap, in respect to the company's losses the past year. Being apprised of it by the kindness of the Secretary, as we had previously been by the Boston actuary, a correction is cheerfully made. In doing so, liberty has been taken to extract such parts of a private letter as furnish reliable statistical information touching the business operations thus far of the above-named company. If Life Insurance Companies generally are such firm supporters of educated, scientific physicians, the brotherhood should, if they do not

take out policies for themselves, use their influence in behalf of corporations that set their faces decidedly and irrevocably against all orders of quacks and quackery.

"Our losses should have been stated at \$1,000 and 2,000—making \$3,000, which is all we have any knowledge of. It is a singular fact, that one of these died of a doctor, and the other died for the want of one; but so it is. Mr. Habberton's physician was a 'homœopath.' Had we known that fact, we should not have insured him, unless he agreed to employ a *doctor* if suffering under any serious disease. Capt. Wheaton, of the New York packet-ship Iowa, died of *gastro-enteritis*, on a home voyage, lat. 27, 35, lon. 70, 40. He had on board one of the most valuable of the army surgeons, and instead of availing himself of his professional services, doctored himself until the day previous to death.

"It is always one of our rules to reject an insurance, if we know the family physician to be a quack, or belonging to that class of practitioners whose system of practice is to give that which would neither inconvenience a well man nor benefit a sick one. Life Insurance Companies should look at the doctor risk, with the same care that they do a sea or a climate risk. We intend to insure none but those who have a home, friends, and a good doctor. Wanderers, the homeless, friendless and heedless, we carefully avoid, and have rejected many applications, where the subject itself was *good*, for the reason that we were unwilling to encounter the risk resulting from personal carelessness, and the chance of being houseless, friendless and doctorless, in case of sickness. We do not allow an insured person to trifle with his life (or if he does, not to trifle with our funds), by going into the Southern States during the sickly months, nor by wandering in unsettled portions of the United States; but all this risk is, in our opinion, not so great as that incurred by insuring a man, who, when he becomes sick, allows a certain class of doctors to trifle with his life. As we seek business only from the old and healthy States, and profess to be, and being truly, a 'perfectly Mutual Company,' it requires much care and some sagacity to preserve untarnished the standard we have adopted.

"The operation of the 'perfectly mutual' system of business forced us to shut out entirely California risks. It being impossible to form any reasonable conclusion, as to the probable mortality, beyond the home average, we could not establish a standard of rates, which would promise protection to home policy holders against loss from this branch of business. And as to experiments, we have no right to make any. But, as trustees and guardians of a fund set apart for the protection of widows and orphans, it is our duty to protect it from trespasses of all kinds, and allow nothing to tempt us to do the first act which tends to inequality or injustice.

"It has always been our rule to reject risks not 'good for life.' The 7 year rates are predicated upon the same standard of health, constitution, and prospect of longevity, that the life rates are; therefore a party must be eligible to a life policy, to obtain one for 7 years.

"Our progress has been equal to our expectations. Every branch of the company is in good hands, and every thing is in a pleasant and prosperous condition."

The Cholera.—Our readers are all probably aware, that in addition to the slight prevalence of this disease in N. York, it has broken out in New

Orleans, where, thus far, its brief but fatal ravages have seemed clearly to identify it with the scourge which has depopulated so many cities in the older world. We have as yet seen nothing definite respecting its treatment in the latter place.

Dr. Whiting, at the quarantine ground, New York, in an official communication to the Board of Health, narrates his method of treatment thus:—"The treatment I have now adopted and adhere to, from its decided agency in controlling the symptoms, and inducing early reaction, is the exhibition of moderate doses of calomel, with morphine, at short intervals. Five grains of calomel, with a quarter of a grain of sulph. morphia, is at first given to an adult; in a half an hour, or one hour, a scruple dose of calomel is exhibited, and is usually retained; afterwards a pill of cal. grs.v., sulph. morphine gr. 1-4, is given each hour, two hours or three hours, as the effect may indicate. This is observed in the subsidence of the pain and spasms, the diminished quantity and frequency of the evacuations, the return of warmth, and the restoration of the pulse.

This treatment is continued until some indications of bilious action appear; the first is usually a change of color and consistence from the light rice water, to a greenish, and then brownish yellow color. The evacuations from the stomach and bowels will frequently continue green, or of the color of sulphate of copper, for hours, but I have not known a single case to relapse where this effect had once been produced.

"I was led to substitute the morphine for opium, from its being less liable to disturb the stomach or to produce narcosis, an effect to be deprecated in this stage of congestion, except it results naturally from the obviation of pain and excitement.

"In children, however, under six or seven years, I have used Dover's powder in preference to morphine, as being more manageable in regard to the dose. A very simple remedy, but one that I have used in children with happy effects, has been the tea of the spearmint, given hot in the first stages, and afterwards cold, in a small quantity, a large spoonful occasionally.

"The most valuable external means is the stream of hot vapor of alcohol, poured over the patient by a very simple apparatus at the foot of the bed. This is a large alcohol lamp placed under a sheet iron cylinder, with a pipe running from it. The lamp is placed on the floor, and the tube with an elbow, and terminating in a large funnel to elevate the clothes, is inserted under the bed clothes. This and hot mustard applications are the only external means that I rely on. They are potent, and can be continued without the fatigue and exposure of the patient, a paramount desideratum, as there is plenty of both to contend with as inevitable effects of the disease."

Philosophy of Marriage.—We are positively in a quandary in regard to the manner of commenting on this book. As for denouncing it, that would never do; and while acknowledging that it possesses a prodigious amount of historical, traditional, legal, and physiological facts, which men and women of all conditions of life will read with avidity, if placed within their reach, we cannot say that it is absolutely necessary for students or physicians to have a copy, although they would derive some information from it. The title runs thus, "*Philosophy of Marriage, in its social, moral, and physical relations, with an account of the diseases of the genito-urinary*

organs, which impair or destroy the reproductive function, and induce a variety of complaints; with the philosophy of generation in the vegetable and animal kingdoms—being part of a course of obstetrical lectures delivered at the North London School of Medicine, by Michael Ryan, M.D., &c." Philadelphia, published by Barrington & Haswell.—Curiosity, that mysterious, innate prompting power of the mind, urges us to seek out knowledge on every point embraced in the foregoing category of untalkable subjects, which mankind, by common consent, leave for each one to learn about as they can. Dr. Ryan is above reproach or suspicion; and with a singular degree of candor and independence, explains, in a true and philosophical manner, every branch of the subject which he considers essential to be understood by all intelligent persons. Perhaps we may return to this work again, with reference to some of Dr. Ryan's remarks on abortion, which we consider of higher value than those advanced by the generality of authors.

Veneral and other Diseases arising from Sexual Intercourse.—Messrs. Barrington & Haswell are also the publishers of this useful practical guide. The name of M. Ricord is a guaranty in regard to the intrinsic value of this series of lectures. At first they were reported and translated by Victor De Meric, M.D., for the London Lancet, and are the most recent of all publications on venereal diseases. Twenty-eight lectures are given, which fully and minutely embody the experience of the past and present day, in the treatment of those maladies having an origin in the source adverted to in the title sheet. It has an advantage over more costly books upon the same topic, because it is *multum in parvo*, and may be purchased for a trifle. Messrs. Ticknor & Co., of Boston, have it for sale.

Quarterly Homœopathic Journal.—No. 1, Vol. I., of a portly, excellently well printed Journal, under the editorial guidance of A. C. Becker, M.D., of Cambridge, Mass., devoted exclusively to the new school of the Homœopathists, was ushered into being with the commencement of the new year. Mr. Otis Clapp, No. 23 School st., Boston, is the publisher, which is recorded with pleasure, that those who may wish to patronize the Quarterly, may know the proper address; and it also affords us an opportunity of saying that he is a man eminently deserving of patronage. This Journal is almost wholly made up of translations from sources in Europe that command the respect of homœopathists. We regret that there is not more from the editor. He is unquestionably a high-minded, accomplished physician, fully competent to speak with decision upon all subjects embraced in the doctrines of homœopathy. There has been a little unwillingness to let the allopathic gentry know all about the internal dissensions of the infinitesimal fraternity. Dr. Becker has raised the curtain up to the ceiling, so that the fact is no longer concealed that there are two distinct parties. One division adheres to true, unadulterated Hahnemannism—called by the disciples, pure homœopathy; the other, according to Dr. Becker, takes whatever is confirmed by reason and experience—which is *rational* homœopathy. Further examination of the papers constituting the Journal, will probably lead to a more extended series of observations upon it.

Mortality in 1848.—The mortality in Boston for the year 1848, is a little over 4000 in number, which is a decrease of nearly 100 on the year

1847, but an increase on 1846 of about 700. The mortality in 1846 was 3889; 1847, 4121.

The number of persons who died in other places, but were brought to this city for burial, was about 150. A very great proportion of the deaths, says the Boston Traveller, are of those of foreign birth, who were mostly carried to Charlestown and Cambridge for burial.

The mortality in Worcester, in 1848, according to the Worcester Telegraph, was 415. In 1847, 375. Increase in 1848, 72. Of the deaths in 1848, 2 were between 90 and 100 years old; 9 from 80 to 90; 15 from 70 to 80; and 99 were under 1 year; 207 were males, 208 were females; 83 were foreigners.

Deaths in New York city for the week ending Dec. 30th, 222—of whom 10 died of apoplexy, 23 of consumption, 21 of convulsions, 11 of dropsy in the head, 5 of scarlet fever, 16 of inflammation of the kidneys, 12 of marasmus, 14 of smallpox, 2 killed or murdered, 5 of disease of the heart, 5 of palsy, 3 of old age, &c. While the deaths in New York are below the average, in Boston they exceed it.

Surgeon General's Report.—This is a concentrated document, just three octavo pages long, and therefore will be extensively read. Dr. Lawson regrets, in addressing the Secretary of War, that he could not procure certain statistical returns of the army sick. Next week we shall endeavor to find room for the report. These short documents from public functionaries are of some value. When they are unnecessarily long, they are disregarded by most people, who believe, with Franklin, that time is money.

The Philadelphia Medical College.—Among the many medical colleges of Philadelphia, the last established (the Philadelphia College) seems destined, from the energy displayed on the part of the Trustees, with the ability of its professors, to distance many of its competitors for public patronage. We learn from an authentic source that its present number of students ranks it as the third in public favor, although the fifth institution of the kind in the city. And we predict that its future course, under the influence of the present talent enlisted, will offer honorable rivalry to the time honored University. We have personal knowledge of the superior energy always at the command of its President to aid in the execution of the duties which devolve upon him, while engaged in giving instruction.

S.

Surgical Cases at the Charity Hospital, New Orleans.—Several interesting surgical cases have been admitted into this institution—among this number we may mention a young German who received, some time since, a penetrating wound in the abdomen, entering the centre of the umbilicus, and causing a protrusion of a large section of *omentum*. Efforts were made by Dr. Compton, under whose charge the case fell, to reduce it, but this was found impracticable until the subject was brought under the influence of *chloroform*, when the protruded omentum was readily returned. This was about two weeks past, since which time the patient has been doing well.

Another interesting case of penetrating wound of the abdomen, took

place some three or four weeks since. A young man, we believe an Irishman—was stabbed in the abdomen; the knife entered about half way between the umbilicus and the crest of the ilium—penetrating, as was supposed, the descending colon. It was manifest that the gut had been wounded, because fecal matter continued to be discharged from the wound for many days; but under the influence of opiates, antiphlogistics, and repose, the fecal matter gradually ceased to be discharged, the wound ultimately healed, under the judicious management of Dr. Nott, in whose care he was; and a few days since, the patient was discharged well, the natural course of the bowels having been perfectly re-established. This is a very instructive case, and shows how competent nature must be to repair serious lesions, if allowed to take her own wise course—when aided by a judicious surgeon.—*N. Orleans Med. and Surgical Journal.*

Medical Miscellany.—A case of death by hydrophobia occurred in Boston on Saturday last, being the first of the kind in this city for a number of years. The individual, Mr. Charles T. Bean, was bitten a few months since, but no bad effects were felt till Wednesday last, when symptoms of hydrophobia unequivocally developed themselves, and progressed steadily to a fatal termination.—The inhalation of chloroform has been tried in ten cases of cholera successively, in Peckham Asylum, without a single fatal result. This favorable experience has not been borne out in Edinburgh, where this remedy has been very assiduously tried in the cholera hospital without the least apparent good effect.—Spotted fever has made its appearance at Laning, Michigan.—Yin and Yan, according to the Chinese philosophers, are the male and female principles pervading all nature. Even the heart is husband, and the lungs wife. Man is defined by these physiologists, according to Mr. Davis's recent work, to be a little universe, which does not differ essentially from the microcosm of the ancients.—At the shop of a seller of second-hand articles in Paris, after a lapse of 80 years, the original electrical machine, supposed to have been made in Philadelphia, and used by Franklin, has been found by the engineer Audrand, in an excellent state of preservation.—Mr. and Mrs. Randall, of Mineral Point, Wisconsin, called the Scotch giant and giantess, had a first child born recently, which at birth weighed twenty-two pounds.—The Southern Medical and Surgical Journal, a valuable monthly published at Augusta, Geo., under the management of Prof. Eve, states that its patronage is not sufficient to support it, even without allowing anything for editorial services. Only 300 subscribers have paid for the last year.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—Dr. Hitchcock's synopsis of a late trial at Worcester, and Dr. Williams's reply to a late article in the Journal by Dr. Wait, will appear soon—the latter probably with some omissions.

MARRIED.—Dr. Marcellus M. Frisselle, of Rockville, Conn., to Miss Martha M. Smith, of Lee, Mass.—At Cambridge, Mass., Dr. Estes Howe to Miss L. L. White.

Report of Deaths in Boston—for the week ending Jan. 6th, 61.—Males, 33—females, 28.—Of consumption, 12—scarlet fever, 13—lung fever, 3—croup, 6—brain fever, 1—infantile, 3—child-bed, 1—marasmus, 2—hooping cough, 1—old age, 4—tumor, 1—disease of the heart, 3—disease of the bladder, 1—inflammation of the lungs, 2—dropsy, 1—dropsy on the brain, 1—measles, 1—smallpox, 1—canker, 1—influenza, 1—disease of the brain, 1—typhus fever, 1.

Under 5 years, 31—between 5 and 20 years, 4—between 20 and 40 years, 13—between 40 and 60 years, 6—over 60 years, 7.

Cholera.—The following mode of curing cholera in Syria, was addressed to his Excellency the Governor of Bombay, by John Barker.—“Sir, in my quality of late agent, and present pensioner, of the Hon. the East India Company, in Aleppo, I have the honor to address your Excellency, for the purpose of giving you the earliest information of an infallible cure, in the most desperate cases, for the cholera morbus, which has just been proved to have been successful in seventy cases in this district, without one having failed. The treatment is as follows:—

“As soon as possible after the retchings and diarrhœa commence, put the patient's legs up to the knees in water hot as the hand can bear it; add thereto six or seven handfuls of coarse salt; let the legs be rubbed for the space of half an hour by two strong men, each using both his hands, when the large vein of the instep of each foot must be opened, and permitted to flow *in the water*, for from twelve to twenty minutes, according to the sex, age, and strength. During this time, fresh water must be added every now and then as the water in the pail cools.

“Natural animal heat all over the body and consciousness will soon after be restored.

“The patient will generally then speak and ask for food, and, if a soldier, he will return to the parade in a few days in perfect health.

“In some cases the application of bleeding, as above, will be repeated, and in a very rare case the patient must be bled a third time.

“I have said that the operation of bathing the legs should commence as soon as possible, but as long as there is breath in the nostrils, it must be adopted, for it has succeeded perfectly after six, eight, and even after ten hours had elapsed since the attack; and although those cases were of the worst kind, the patients always recovered their perfect health, and went about their usual occupations, in two, or at most four days. In fact, the cure was perfected in such cases quite as soon as in those where more timely assistance had been procured.

“I shall have the honor of transmitting a copy of this despatch to the Secretary of the Honorable East India Company in London.

“Henceforth a visitation of the cholera will be less a subject of dread than an epidemic of the influenza.”

Death from Chloroform.—On Tuesday last, Mr. Carruthers, a gentleman of fortune, residing at Dormount, Annan, lost his life from the incautious application of chloroform. It appears that he was afflicted with asthma, and having found relief from inhaling the subtle vapor, had frequent recourse to it. Being an expert angler, he sometimes employed himself rather late in adjusting his hooks and making artificial flies. On Tuesday morning he was found sitting at the table apparently following his occupation, in the position in which his servant had left him the preceding night, but it was soon discovered that life had been extinct probably for some hours. On the table was the handkerchief which he had used in applying the chloroform to his mouth.—*Carlisle (Eng.) Pat.*

New Medical Books in London.—Wonders Displayed by the Human Body in its Endurance of Injury.—Revelations on Cholera; or, its Causes and Cure. By Samuel Dickson, M.D.